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ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS

Letter dated 9 November 1992 from the Permanent Representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

We have the honour to refer to rule 81 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly (A/520/Rev.15), and respectfully request that the decision by which all the aspects of agenda item 96 are allocated for discussion and decision to the Third Committee of the General Assembly (see A/47/252) be reconsidered.

It is our opinion that the critical situation with refugees in the territories of two Member States, namely the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Croatia, calls for the discussion of a part of that agenda item (item 96 (a), Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) in plenary meeting of the General Assembly. Documents A/47/12 1/ and A/47/12/Add.1 2/ depict the situation with the refugees, returnees and displaced persons as a global problem, and thus the entire sub-item deserves to have an open discussion in plenary meeting.

Since there is imminent danger of starvation, freezing and death of an estimated 400,000 people in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the coming months; since there are approximately 750,000 refugees and displaced persons in Croatia that are in urgent need of help and assistance; since the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has recognized that there is "extreme suffering" of the civilian population in the "former Yugoslavia" (see A/47/12/Add.1, para. 29) and that immediate measures need to be undertaken; since the situation has resulted in displacement of

"over three million persons and destruction on a massive scale" (ibid.); since this situation represents the most difficult humanitarian problem in Europe since the end of the Second World War - we believe that the discussion of this part of agenda item 96 should be reallocated to plenary meeting of the General Assembly.

We do not seek that agenda item 96 be reallocated from the proceedings of the Third Committee to the plenary in its entirety; we believe that the Third Committee should remain seized of the customary business of the item and could take up for debate the reports of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/47/12 and Add.1).

But at the same time, the part of this debate relating to the situation in the territory of the former Yugoslavia - due to the importance of the issue and the immediate help that is needed to prevent the suffering and alleviate the already existing "extreme suffering" - should be placed on the agenda for one of the forthcoming plenary meetings of the General Assembly as soon as practicable.

We would kindly request the distribution of this letter as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 8 and 96.

(Signed) Muhamed SACIRBEY
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina
to the United Nations

(Signed) Mario NOBILO
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Croatia to the
United Nations

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 12 (A/47/12).

2/ Ibid., Supplement No. 12A (A/47/12/Add.1).